

HEALTH NEWS *from*

FALL 2018

doctors hospital OF LAREDO

A new lease on life

Jose "Polo" Dominguez
reclaims his health with
weight-loss surgery

Inside:

A NEW LUNG CANCER SCREENING PROGRAM

Providing a pathway to early detection

READY, SET, RENOVATE

Providence Health Center gets a makeover



Compliments of
**DOCTORS
HOSPITAL**



It's an amazing time of growth for our community and for Doctors Hospital of Laredo. To better serve your needs, we continue to expand our services and build our network of providers.

In this issue, you can read about some of the exciting changes underway, like the renovation at our Providence Health Center

to enhance access to surgical care and provide a more inviting space for other vital health services. You can also learn about a new lung screening program that can help detect lung cancer earlier, when it is more treatable. In our cover story, we introduce you to Jose "Polo" Dominguez, who has experienced a major health transformation following weight-loss surgery.

Meeting the needs of our growing community requires that we continue to recruit skilled physicians and bring services closer to the neighborhoods we serve. In our "Ask the Doctor" column, we're pleased to introduce you to Ernesto A. Spinazze, MD, who recently joined the medical staff to provide specialized urological care. For emergency care, we're working to make services more accessible with new freestanding facilities, which you will hear more about in the coming weeks and months.

With all the exciting changes that are happening, we remain focused on what is most important: you, our patients. We continue to look for ways to make your experience even better and help keep our community thriving.

James Resendez, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer

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We've earned **Level III** status for **NICU!**

As a testament to our advanced, comprehensive services, we recently received designation as a Level III Neonatal Intensive Care service provider from the Texas Department of State Health Services. Level of care designations are a result of legislation passed in 2013 for the purpose of ensuring neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) have the expertise and resources needed to comply with mandatory rules guiding provision of appropriate high-quality care.

Visit doctorshosplaredo.com/new to learn more about our maternity and newborn care.

LUNG SCREENING is now available

It's quick, painless and it could possibly save your life.

Lung cancer is by far the leading cause of cancer death among both men and women, according to the American Cancer Society. Identifying this disease early is key to survival, but symptoms are not always present right away. To provide a pathway to early detection, Doctors Hospital of Laredo recently introduced a new lung cancer screening program.

"The goal is to find and diagnose lung cancer at its earlier stages, when it is more treatable," says Director of Radiology Carlos Farias RT(R)(CT). As part of the screening process, the hospital's nurse navigator collaborates with referring physicians to schedule and administer a low-dose CT scan for patients who meet certain criteria (see sidebar).

"During a low-dose CT scan, the patient lies on a table and an X-ray machine uses a low dose of radiation to make detailed images of the lungs," says Farias. "The scan only takes a few minutes and is not painful. The results then get transferred into software called DynaCAD and DynaLync, where the patient's information will be stored, tracked and managed. Upon identification of any changes within the patient, the referring physician will be notified and proper treatment options will be discussed."

In the event of a cancer diagnosis, patients may receive support from Doctors Regional Cancer Treatment Center, which has been providing quality care and research right here in the community for 31 years. The new lung screening program is one more way Doctors Hospital is working to provide vital services close to home. If you or someone you love is concerned about lung cancer risk, getting screened can be the first step in receiving the care needed. ■

You may qualify for a low-dose CT lung screening if you meet the following criteria:

- **You are between 55 and 77 years old**
- **Have no signs or symptoms**
- **Are currently a smoker or have quit within the past 15 years, and**
- **Have smoked at least a pack of cigarettes a day for 30+ years**

The best way to reduce your risk of lung cancer is not to smoke and to avoid secondhand smoke. Visit the webpage below for a link to helpful tips on quitting.

For more information on our lung cancer screening program, visit doctorshosplaredo.com/lungscreen.



A second chance *at life*

Jose "Polo" Dominguez lost 160 pounds with weight-loss surgery and is feeling like a kid again in his 50s.



Jose Dominguez before surgery.



“I’m not going to lie, it’s very hard, but once you get into it, it’s a piece of cake,” Dominguez says of the path that got him to where he is today.

It was two years ago that he decided to have bariatric surgery. His weight had reached a point where he was regularly in pain in his feet and his joints. His body would ache just from driving long distances in the car, and he had high blood pressure and sleep apnea. He wanted to lose weight in a safe and timely manner, and he was ready to do what was needed to achieve his goals. In March 2016, he had gastric sleeve surgery at Doctors Hospital of Laredo.

“I didn’t take care of myself. Now it’s a different ball game.”

Jose (Polo) Dominguez

This minimally invasive procedure involves removing a portion of the stomach and creating a thin vertical sleeve, which decreases hunger and increases the feeling of fullness. Dominguez says the first month after the surgery was the toughest, but the team at Doctors Hospital prepared him well so he knew what to expect.

“It’s a process,” Dominguez says of the weight-loss that followed. An essential component involved changing his diet. Before deciding to have the surgery, he gave into temptations like beer, fried chicken and other fattening foods. “I didn’t take care of myself,” he says. “Now it’s a different ball game.”

He’s committed to healthier choices and smaller portions. Exercise also has become a huge part of his life. He started with five minutes of walking and eventually worked up to an hour.

“I went back to the gym,” he says. He does spinning class regularly and sometimes does back-to-back classes.

In the first year, Dominguez lost 120 pounds, and by year two he’d lost 160 pounds. He says that now he can enjoy walking and being active with his wife and family. He has a teenage daughter, an adult son and four grandchildren. “I look at it like having a second chance at life,” he says.



He jokes that he now feels “like a linebacker for the NFL®” instead of a fan snacking on the sidelines. He stays on track by attending bariatric support group meetings at Doctors Hospital. “No doubt about it, they’ve got the best team there,” he says.

Dominguez turns 56 this year and says age was a motivating factor to have the surgery. “I didn’t want it to take too long,” he says, noting that he wanted to lose the weight and start enjoying his life as soon as possible. “It’s all good,” he says of his experience and the results he’s achieved. His advice to others who choose to have weight-loss surgery: “Just stick to it and just go, and don’t look back.” ■

Could you be a candidate for weight-loss surgery?

There are lots of considerations involved in deciding to have bariatric surgery, and Doctors Hospital offers a number of ways for you to find out more about whether this may be an option for you.

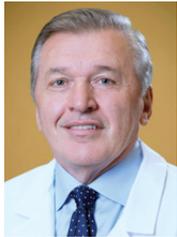
Online seminars provide an opportunity for you to learn about weight-loss surgery and the different procedures available from the comfort of home. Also, a Bariatric Support Group is held regularly for people who have had bariatric surgery or are considering it.

For more information about seminars and the support group, see the back page. If you need a referral to a weight-loss specialist or other physician at Doctors Hospital, visit doctorshosplaredo.com/dr.



Individual results may vary. There are risks associated with any surgical procedure. Talk with your doctor about these risks to find out if bariatric surgery is right for you.

The common cancer **MEN** should know about



Staying healthy involves knowing the potential risks you may face,

and especially for older men, prostate cancer can pose a serious health issue. Urologist **Ernesto A. Spinazze, MD**, recently joined the medical staff at Doctors Hospital of Laredo, and has expertise treating prostate problems and various other urological diseases. Here he shares helpful information.

Q: What is prostate cancer?

The prostate gland is present only in males and sits below the bladder. In younger men, it is about the size of a walnut, and with aging, it tends to grow larger. Prostate cancer occurs when cells in this gland start to grow uncontrollably. It is the most common cancer among American men other than skin cancer, according to the American Cancer Society.

Q: Who is most at risk?

Age is a major risk factor, and the chances of having prostate cancer are much greater after age 50. Also, African-American men are at higher risk, as are men with a father or brother who was diagnosed with this disease. Additionally, other factors like a high-fat diet are believed to play a role.

Q: What are the symptoms?

There are not always symptoms in the early stages, but some possible signs may include a weak urine stream, blood in the semen or urine, or the need to urinate more often at night. It's important to know that these symptoms are also often caused by a non-cancerous condition called benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). See your doctor right away about any concerns you're having.

Q: Should you be screened?

Screening can help to detect prostate cancer earlier, when it is more treatable. It typically involves having a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test and digital rectal exam. Your doctor can help you decide if you should be screened based on your individual health and medical history. Prostate cancer can be deadly, but many men can survive with specialized treatment. ■



Dr. Spinazze's office is located at the McPherson Medical Center, 6801 McPherson Road, Suite 333. To make an appointment, please call 956-462-2009.

Building on our commitment to you

To better serve the needs of our growing community and enhance access to surgical care, we're giving the Providence Health Center a major renovation.

Operating rooms and other spaces that were previously out of use are being fully updated and equipped to restore surgical services, giving patients in the Laredo area a new, centrally located place to go for specialized care. The focus at the Providence facility will be on supporting lower acuity (less serious) procedures, such as ophthalmology, dental and ear/nose/throat surgeries, as well as low acuity general and orthopedic surgeries. This will open up more OR capacity at Doctors Hospital of Laredo for more acute surgeries, such as general surgery, weight-loss, orthopedic, gynecological and vascular procedures.

"We've been working with the city and other entities to be in the forefront with strategic planning," says the hospital's Chief Operating Officer Raymond Ramos, MPH, FACHE. "Within the next 15 to 20 years, the city is expected to almost double in size," he says. "This is one way to improve our surgical capacity and overall hospital operations, and ensure that patients have access to the high-quality services they need," Ramos says.

Along with surgical care, the newly renovated Providence Health Center will continue to house an inpatient rehab nursing unit, laboratory draw station and radiology services. These areas will also be refreshed as part of the renovation project. This is a "comprehensive facility upgrade," bringing back surgical services and beautifying the center inside and out, Ramos says. ■

Renovations are planned to be completed in early 2019 at the Providence Health Center, located at 230 Calle Del Norte. For updates and information about our services, follow us on Facebook or visit us at doctorshosplaredo.com.



Highlights of our \$7+ million Providence Health Center project include:

- Re-equipping three operating rooms, the post anesthesia care unit (PACU), pre-op and central sterile departments to restore surgical operations.
- Replacing outdated infrastructure components and enhancing the lobby and interior building aesthetics, including painting, installing new tile flooring and adding new way-finding signage to create a more welcoming and modern space.



CALENDAR OF *events*



CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION

The prepared childbirth class covers information for your entire pregnancy, including labor, pain management, breastfeeding and newborn care. A tour will be included.

WHERE: Community Center

WHEN: Sessions are held from 6 – 8 p.m.

- November 13
- December 4

WHO: Instructors are Sharon Priest, RN, and Maria Noela Avila, RN, IBCLC, Lactation Consultant.

Register at doctorshospalaredo.com/edu.

**We recommend that a mom and her support person register and attend during the third trimester of pregnancy. Class size is limited; please register early. Children are not permitted.*

BREASTFEEDING CLASSES

Open to all moms, even if it is not your first baby. All mothers are encouraged to attend before and/or after they deliver. Our Lactation Consultant is ready to offer support and guidance.

WHERE: Postpartum Conference Room

WHEN: Last Thursday of every month, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

To register call 956-523-2530; if there is no answer, please leave a message.

**WEIGHT-LOSS SURGERY
ONLINE SEMINARS**

If you want to learn more about weight-loss surgery, you can now get the information you need in the comfort of your home. Find out more by watching a series of videos about weight-loss surgery at Doctors Hospital of Laredo. Go to ichoosedoctorshospital.com/videoseminar.

BARIATRIC SUPPORT GROUP

Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m.

Providence Health Center (main lobby)
Open to anyone who has had bariatric surgery or is considering it.

- December 12: Holiday Potluck Party

Be sure to check the Event Calendar on our website for the 2019 support group schedule, coming soon!



**Connect
WITH US!**



English: ichoosedoctorshospital.com | Español: ichoosedoctorshospital.com/es
956-523-2000

**HEALTH NEWS FROM
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